The Khojaly genocide is a grave tragedy for Azerbaijani Turks

PhD. Rahil Najafov[1]

"The Khojaly genocide was directed against the whole Azerbaijani people: its inconceivable cruelty and inhumane massacre methods are an act of atrocity in human history. This genocide, at the same time, is a historical crime against humanity. "

Heydar Aliyev

Abstract. The Khojaly genocide entered the history of Azerbaijan as one of its most terrible and tragic pages. Azerbaijan's national leader Heydar Aliyev in connection with the 10th anniversary of the Khojaly genocide, referring to the Azerbaijani people, said: "This cruel act of genocide entered the history of mankind as one of the worst mass acts of terrorism."[2] It should be noted that for 200 years Azerbaijan has endured ethnic cleansing and genocide by Armenian chauvinists. Azerbaijanis were expelled from their historical lands, became refugees and IDPs, and this was accompanied by massacres committed by Armenians. Mass expulsion of Azerbaijanis from their historical and ethnic homelands occurred during the Soviet period. From 1948-1953 150,000 Azerbaijanis were deported from Armenia and placed in the Kur-Araz lowland. And in 1988 250 thousand Azerbaijanis were expelled from their historical lands, and thus Armenia became a mono-ethnic state. Events that unfolded around Nagorno-Karabakh from 1988, as striving Armenian ideologists implemented their crazy idea "*Armenia from sea to sea*" led to the destruction of villages, towns, the death of tens of thousands of innocent people, as well as the expulsion of hundreds of thousands of Azerbaijanis from their native lands.

Keywords: Genocide, Khojaly, Karabakh war, massacre, Nagorno Karabakh/

Introduction.

The Armenian state, contrary to all international norms annexed Nagorno Karabakh, demonstrating willingness to commit crime and atrocities. The Khojaly genocide is a great tragedy of the twentieth century, is a result of this aggressive and criminal policy. This tragedy, which occurred at the end of the twentieth century, was one of the worst crimes directed not only against the Azerbaijani people, but against the whole of humanity. The Khojaly genocide is on part with other terrible tragedies of the 20th century such as Khatyn, Hiroshima, Nagasaki and My Lai.

What was the goal pursued by the Armenians, choosing as their target the town of Khojaly? On one hand the removal of a mountainous part of Karabakh's interference in terms of strategic value, on the other hand, the Armenians just wanted to completely destroy Khojaly - a settlement which reflects the historical and cultural traditions of the Azerbaijani people from ancient times to the modern period. This particular culture is notable in history as the *Khojaly-Gadabay culture*[3]. Cromlechs, dolmens, Cyclops, mounds and other monuments of Khojaly, as well as various household objects are an epitome of culture, reflecting the dynamics of the development of human

1 Azerbaijan National Academy of Sciences
2 Aliyev Z. Khojaly genocide as an International crime. Baku. Europe press, 2015, p.29.
3 https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Khojaly%E2%80%93Gadabay_culture

society. Following the Armenian occupation of all these cultural monuments, Khojali cemetery which was considered as one of the most ancient burial sites by dating technology was destroyed. This Armenian vandalism was an act of violence directed against world culture and heritage.

On February 26th, 1992 Armenian military forces committed genocide against Khojaly town, which had a population of 7,000. During the attack on the city by military units there were only about three thousand people left because of the city having been under siege for more than 4 months, the majority of the population had been forced to leave.

During the Khojaly genocide 613 people were killed, 1,000 innocent people of various ages became invalid due to bullet wounds. Armenians killed 106 women, 63 children and 70 old men, 8 families were completely destroyed, 25 children lost both parents, 130 - one of their parents. 1,275 peaceful residents were taken as hostages, while the fate of 150 of them is still unknown.

All this was put into practice by the Armenian military with shocking mercilessness and inconceivable barbarism. The 2nd Battalion of the 366th Regiment commanded by Major Seyran Ohanyan Mushegovich (currently Seyran Ohanyan is the "defense minister" of the illegal regime in Nagorno-Karabakh), and the 3rd Battalion, under the command of Eugene Nabokihina, as well as the Chief of Staff of the 1st Battalion Chitchyan Valeriy and more than 50 officers and warrant officers of the regiment.[4].

Some people wanting to escape were killed in a pre-arranged ambush. According to the Russian human rights center "Memorial" 200 corpses were transported from Khojaly to Aghdam over 4 days- the abuse of dozens of corpses were revealed. In Agdam 181 corpses (130 men and 51 women, including 13 children) underwent forensic examination. During the examination, it was found that the cause of death of 151 people were bullet wounds, 20 - missile wound, 10 people died from blunt trauma. The Legal Resource Centre also discovered the occurance of live scalping.

Episodes of Khojaly genocide lead man in horror. A resident of Khojaly, who refused to speak the words "This land - part of Great Armenia", forced upon him by the Armenian military was burned alive. Another resident of Khojaly, Saria Talybova told that "4 Meskhetian Turks and 3 Azerbaijanis were beheaded over the grave of an Armenian. Then two more Azerbaijanis had their eyes gouged out."[5]

Armenians mocked survivors of their attack. They scalped people, cut off their heads and other body parts, blinded children and cut open the bellies of pregnant women. During the attack in Khojaly illegal 5.45 ammunition and chemical weapons were utilised. All these acts confirm the fact of Armenian violation of protocols of the Geneva Convention and the crime of genocide against the civilian population of Khojaly.

The Khojaly genocide which was perpetrated with cruelty horrified Russian, Georgian, English, French, German, American and other journalists and writers who are citizens of other countries[6].

The appeal for Khojaly refugees at the UN, the European Union and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe state: For more than 10 years, we, the people of Khojaly have been refugees. With a heavy heart, and at the same time with great hope, we appeal to all peace-loving peoples, all international organizations. We ask you not to remain indifferent to the trouble

[4] "From the researching materials concerning Khojaly genocide". www.khojaly.net
[5] http://www.khojaly.net/
[6] Aliyev Z. Khojaly genocide as an International crime. Baku. Europe press, 2015, p.33.

that befell us as a result of Armenian military aggression. We believe that such authoritative international organizations as the UN, EU and OSCE, as well as peaceful states will take measures against the aggression and tyranny of Armenia.

Adopted in the world of international conventions, laws worldwide condemn genocides like the Khojaly tragedy, declare it inadmissible. Azerbaijani people have the right to file a lawsuit in the International Court of Justice against the Republic of Armenia, guided by the Convention "Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide" declared on December 9, 1948. The world must know that it is a crime directed not only against the Azerbaijani people, but also against the whole of humanity. Today, people in high places in Armenia, Seyran Ohanyan, Serzh Sargsyan and Robert Kocharyan and others, as the perpetrators of the genocide which happened, must respond to the international court"[7].

Thise crime must not go unpunished. The military-political aggression of Armenia should be exposed by the world community. International organizations, parliaments of the world should give political and legal assessment of the Khojaly genocide committed by the Armenian Republic in Azerbaijan as a true genocide.

Today, the recognition of this tragedy in the world, as well as bringing truthful information about the massacre in Khojaly to the world of communication is the sacred duty of every Azerbaijani. Since 2008 the international campaign "Justice for Khojaly" has been active led by Leyla Aliyeva, the Vice-President of the Heydar Aliyev Foundation, General Coordinator of the Youth Forum of the Organization of the Islamic Conference for Dialogue and Cooperation for Intercultural Dialogue. Conducting worldwide campaign events dedicated to the Khojaly genocide, plays a significant role in bringing the truth to the international community, the essence of a violent policy of Armenia against our country. The most successful result of the campaign "Justice for Khojaly" was the recognition of this tragedy by the parliaments of Pakistan, Mexico, Peru, the Czech Republic, Colombia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as many international organizations as an act of genocide. At the same time, to educate the people of the world about the act of genocide against our compatriots, erected monuments, commemorates Khojaly martyrs. Appeal campaigns to recognize the Khojaly tragedy as an act of genocide and crimes against humanity have been signed by tens of thousands of people around the world[8].

Stable development of the country and the establishment of its leading state in the region, despite all threats of attack also brings the resolution of the Karabakh conflict within the framework of national interests of Azerbaijanis. Azerbaijan's strongest weapon in this regard is its fair position. Alongside the fair position of Azerbaijan is the desire to demand fair treatment of foreign policy and the implementation of international legal norms. Because of the real threats against the territorial integrity and sovereignty of the country according to the principles of international law permitted rights such as the right to use force, allow Azerbaijan any means to liberate its land, to restore its sovereignty within its borders[9]. Unfortunately, however, in relation to the Karabakh conflict it is seen that the issue of implementation of international legal norms has not yet gone beyond formal confirmation. No matter how bitter this fact is, it still shows the superiority

[7] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Khojaly
[8] Caroline C. "Ethnic Cleansing in Progress: War in Nagorno Karabakh" (PDF version).
[9] http://www. karabakh.co.uk/

of global forces in world politics serving the interests of their individual communities[10]. However, Azerbaijan's powerful army and state are unanimous in their declaration that the the day of liberation from enemy occupation is not far. And this we must do ourselves. It is time to halt the loss of Azerbaijani lands, which has continued for centuries. Karabakh and its incurable wound Khojaly genocide should be a turning point in the historical destiny of Azerbaijan and all the Turkic world. A return to the land of our ancestors, a return to the monumental history of Turkic unity is connected with the liberation of Karabakh. The implementation of the honor of returning the glorious history of Azerbaijan, restoration of territorial integrity of our country – is our sacred duty to future generations.

Conclusion

Azerbaijanis should wage a determined and joint struggle against those who threaten our common homeland with death and blood. We deeply believe that in the name of the peoples who have entered the twenty-first century, who live happily in the name of justice and, in the name of the highest human aspirations, the state parliaments of the world, as well as international organizations will support the restoration of justice. Supporting the resolution of the Karabakh conflict through peace and negotiations, we once again express our confidence in the fact that as a result of the joint efforts of states, parliaments of the world and international organizations will ensure the territorial integrity of the Republic of Azerbaijan will be ensured, and refugees and internally displaced persons will be returned to their homes.

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